

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 07173 060948Z
ACTION EA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4231

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 7173

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR AS
SUBJECT: CONTRACT OPERATION AT NAVCOMSTA HAROLD E. HOLT

REF: (A) STATE 143115; (B) CANBERRA 4588

1. REF (A) ASKED FOR EMBASSY'S VIEWS ABOUT LIKELY REACTION TO PROPOSAL TO SWITCH OVER TO CIVILIAN CONTRACT OPERATION (VS. US NAVY "BLUE-SUITERS"). OUR INITIAL REACTION WAS (A) THIS ISN'T A VERY GOOD TIME TO BE RAISING THIS PROPOSAL; (B) DEPENDS ON WHETHER YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT AN AUSTRALIAN CONTRACTOR OR A U.S. CONTRACTOR AND (C) IT'S A MATTER THAT WOULD REQUIRE CLOSEST CONSULTATION WITH GOA.

2. IF DEPARTMENT WISHES US TO PURSUE THE IDEA OF CONTRACT OPERATION AT NAVCOMSTA AT HAROLD E. HOLD, WE BELIEVE NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS WOULD PROBABLY BE AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY. IF WE DO BROACH THE MATTER WITH ADOD, IT SHOULD BE WITH THE THOUGHT THAT THE VERY FIRST RPT FIRST QUESTION THEY WILL ASK IS WHETHER THE CONTRACTOR WILL BE AUSTRALIAN. SECOND QUESTION WILL BE WHAT IMPACT DO WE EXPECT SWITCH-OVER TO HAVE ON TOWN OF EXMOUTH.

ACTION REQUESTED: VIEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT ON WHETHER YOU WISH US TO PURSUE THE MATTER WITH ADOD.

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PAGE 02 CANBER 07173 060948Z

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Message Attributes

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